Whither Aviation Foreign Internal Defense?

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IN 1994 AIR FORCE Special Operations Command stood up the 6th Special Operations Squadron (6 SOS), the first--ever USAF squadron dedicated to the foreign internal defense (FID) mission area. With roots in special air warfare dating back to the Vietnam War and even as far back as the Second World War, the 6 SOS was created to advise, train, and assist foreign aviation forces in the application of airpower in internal defense and development. Since that time the squadron has expanded its mission to include coalition support roles and combat advisory operations in keeping with the emerging missions that comprise operations other than war (OOTW). Nevertheless, the core mission has remained intact: inculcating in foreign air forces the idea of the utility of airpower across the conflict spectrum.

Since its inception, however, the 6 SOS has been plagued by a host of difficulties in fulfilling the vision of its creators, the most salient of which stem from the question of whether the squadron should have aircraft appropriate to its third world mission. Aircraft remain critical to the original vision of what has become the 6 SOS, but as of this writing, only two aged UH--1N helicopters—originally en route to the bone-

yard—have been assigned to the squadron. This is regrettable since aviation--centered FID rests on the fundamental premise that airpower plays a crucial role in meeting the threat of foreign internal conflict. And airpower means airplanes. Thus the fundamental question: If aviation FID is predicated on the employment of airplanes and the 6 SOS is not properly equipped in that regard, whither aviation FID?

Framing the Discussion

By the end of the 1970s, US special operations forces (SOF) were *caput mortuum*.[1] Army special forces had been gutted, Navy special warfare had fared little better, and Air Force special operations forces (AFSOF) had barely survived a concerted attempt to relegate them completely to the Reserves.[2]

The Desert One debacle in April 1980–the disastrous Iranian hostage rescue mission–simply underscored the extent to which SOF had atrophied since the Vietnam War. In the aftermath of that effort, the Defense Department "halfheartedly" moved to invigorate SOF—to include the creation of a Joint Special Operations Agency in 1984. The services were reluctant to relinquish control over SOF, however; they regarded this advisory body merely as an irritant and largely resisted its recommendations. Consequently, frustrated by Defense Department foot--dragging, and intent upon putting purpose and power behind SOF revitalization, Congress passed the Cohen--Nunn Amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act of 1986. The unquestionable design of

RH-53s on board the USS Nimitz. The tragedy of Desert One in April 1980 simply underscored the extent to which special operations forces had atrophied since the Vietnam War.

this amendment was to force "revitalization" of "SOF and SOF resources."[3]

Among the findings of Section 1453 of the Defense Authorization Act of 1986 was the conclusion that SOF "are the military mainstay of the United States for the purposes of nation--building and training friendly foreign forces." The straightforward stated purpose of SOF involvement was to preclude "deployment or combat involving the conventional or strategic forces of the United States."[4] Such foreign advisory and training assistance ultimately fell within the purview of foreign internal defense, which was subsequently delineated as one of the five principal missions of American special operations forces.[5]

Responding to the legislation, the Reagan administration promulgated National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) 277, which outlined US strategy for low intensity conflict (LIC). The subsequent 1988 report, entitled *National Security Strategy of the United States*, included an unclassified distillation of NSDD 277. Among several salient features, it declared that LIC strategy would seek to "strengthen friendly nations facing internal or external threats to their independence."[6]

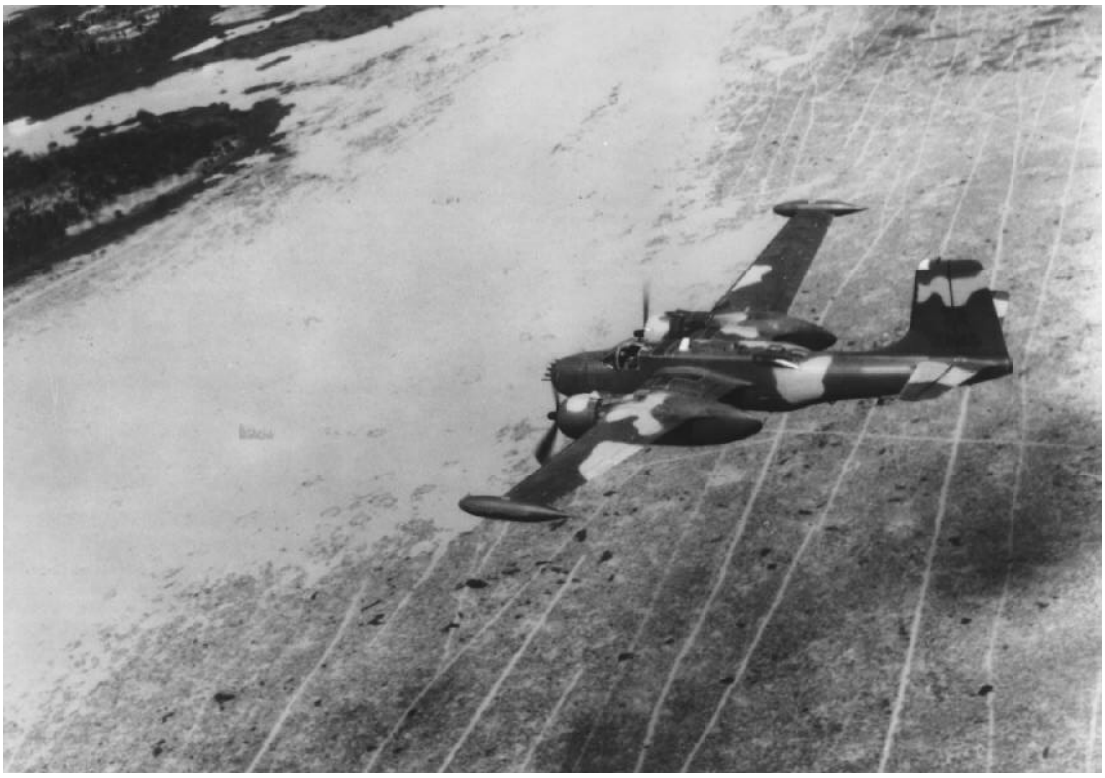
Defense reform was the anodyne of 1986, and the Goldwater--Nichols Act was a sweeping piece of legislation mandating specific actions. For example, Section 211 broadened and strengthened the authority of combatant commands. But more importantly for SOF, Section 212 directed the "creation of a unified combatant command for special operations."[7] As a result, the National Defense Authorization Act of 1987, signed by President Reagan in October 1986, created United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) under US public law.[8] Shortly afterward, the services created their own special operations commands as components of USSOCOM. The initial Air Force component was a numbered air force (Twenty--Third Air Force) rather than a major command, but Air Force reticence was ultimately overcome with the stand--up of Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) in May 1990.

Albeit foreign internal defense was one of the five principal missions of SOF, criticism emerged as early as 1990 that USSOCOM was more concerned with "raids, rescue, and Rambo."[9] In January 1991 *Armed Forces Journal International* scolded the new command for "highlighting the Rambo or direct action side of special operations" while at the same time it praised the Marine Corps for "a better understanding" of LIC.[10] Indeed, the only SOF component placing any emphasis on FID was Army special forces, although Navy special warfare units were perceived to have an inherent FID capability. The missing piece of the pie was aviation.

Thus, in March 1990, Gen James Lindsay, then commander in chief of USSOCOM (CINCSOC), validated the AFSOC--proposed concept of an aviation--centered FID capability. Although acknowledging that FID is "larger than just SOF," General Lindsay went on to state that "the focal point for organization, doctrine development, training, and operational proponency . . . should be organizations for which FID is a principal mission—USSOCOM and AFSOC."[11] Armed with the CINC's go--ahead, AFSOC proceeded to build a dedicated aviation--FID capability from the ground up, and in May 1993 USSOCOM Directive 10--1 designated AFSOC as the "proponent" for aviation FID.[12] The following year, in October 1994, the 6th Special Operations Squadron became the first Air Force SOF organization dedicated to the FID mission area.

Digressions: Special Air Warfare and Aviation FID

John Keegan writes that "continuities, particularly hidden continuities, form the principal subject of historical enquiry." It is the "identification of links" between the past and present which enables us to comprehend our actions in context.[13] In that



When the 4400th CCTS was activated in April 1961, its table of organization included eight A-26 strike aircraft.

light, the concept of aviation--centered FID is not original: it is a response to the void created in SOF FID capabilities following the Vietnam War. Consequently, it is entirely appropriate to reflect briefly upon the history of "special air warfare" as it contributes to the current concept of aviation FID.

Special air warfare traces its roots to World War II, when the US Army Air Force supported the Office of Strategic Services in Europe and created the 1st Air Commando Group in Southeast Asia to support Gen Orde C. Wingate's Chindit forces in Burma. During the Korean War, aerial resupply and communications wings conducted "long--range infiltration/exfiltration missions, supply and resupply missions, [and] psychological operations (PSYOP) missions."[14] However, it was the Vietnam War which witnessed the emergence of special air warfare as it is understood today.[15]

For decades the United States had been engaged in low--level or "small" wars, from the Philippines at the turn of the century to Nicaragua in the 1930s, but the end of the Second World War ushered in what has since become known as the "counterinsurgency era." Its genesis was the Truman Doctrine of containment in 1947, upon which policy makers and military planners constructed rudimentary counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine for combating the communist guerrillas in Greece. But COIN as a theory, a strategy, and a doctrine came into its own in the early 1960s in response to expressed Soviet intentions to attack the United States "indirectly" through insurgency and subversion—that is, "wars of national liberation" or so--called proxy wars.

Recognizing the significance of this threat, President John F. Kennedy promulgated numerous policies and outlined an overarching strategy for countering insurgency.[16]

Early in his administration, President Kennedy directed Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara to examine ways to place greater emphasis on counterinsurgency within the military departments, "to include an adequate capability in all types of units required in counterguerrilla operations or in rendering training assistance to other countries."[17] Although they resisted at first, the services ultimately responded with revised or new doctrine as well as force structure changes intended to meet the president's mandate. Arguably, the most significant force structure change for the Army was the reorientation of US Army special forces from guerrilla operations behind enemy lines to that of counterguerrilla operations.[18]

Although the Air Force nominally continued to perform the FID mission after Vietnam, it was as an adjunct to its conventional mission and was accomplished on an ad hoc basis.

For the Air Force, the three wings activated in the Korean War for unconventional warfare (UW) operations were reduced to two squadrons by 1956 and deactivated altogether in 1957, so that by 1961, there were no specialized units devoted to COIN.[19] However, motivated by continued pressure from the president to develop a specialized capability for COIN, Headquarters Air Force directed Tactical Air Command (TAC) in April 1961 to "organize and equip a unit to (1) train USAF personnel in World War II–type aircraft and equipment; (2) ready a limited number of aircraft for transfer, as required, to friendly governments; (3) provide advanced training of friendly foreign air force personnel on the operation and maintenance of World War II–type aircraft; and (4) develop or improve conventional weapons, tactics, and techniques of employment suitable to the environment of such areas as defined by [the Joint Chiefs of Staff]." The creation of such an organization was made a priority, to be completed by September 1961.[20] Moving very quickly, TAC activated the 4400th Combat Crew Training Squadron (CCTS) at Hurlburt Field, Florida, on 14 April 1961.

The squadron's table of organization included 16 SC--47s, eight A--26s, and eight T--28Bs. By July 1961 the unit was fully manned with 125 officers and 235 airmen. The 4400 CCTS had three specific flying roles: airlift, reconnaissance, and air strike. However, owing to the national strategy of advising and training foreign military forces to carry the burden of counterinsurgency, the principal mission of the 4400 CCTS was to train foreign air force personnel in the application of airpower in COIN. The unclassified nickname for the project was "Jungle Jim."[21]

Communist success in Vietnam during the summer of 1961 compelled the services to accelerate their respective COIN developmental efforts. On 5 September 1961 McNamara announced his intention to establish an experimental command in South Vietnam under the military assistance advisory group "as a laboratory for the development of improved organizational and operational procedures for conducting sublimited war."[22] Secretary of the Air Force Eugene Zuckert gave his hearty endorsement and called McNamara's attention to the 4400 CCTS. On 12 October 1961 the joint chiefs agreed to commit an element of the 4400 CCTS to South Vietnam. The detachment—code--named Farm Gate—deployed in November 1961 and was placed under the command of the 2d Air Division, a subordinate command of Pacific Air Forces.[23] By December 1961, Farm Gate aircraft were authorized to engage the Vietcong provided

In the spring of 1962 the 4400th CCTS expanded and became the 1st Air Commando Group and, as the war in Vietnam unfolded, replaced its aging A-26s and T-28s with A-1Es, like the one shown here.

at least one South Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) crew member was aboard each aircraft.

But interservice rivalry raised its all--too--predictable head. According to Air Force records, the Army's response to presidential insistence on elevating counterinsurgency to a level equal to conventional warfare was an attempt to take full responsibility for COIN. In January 1962 the Army forwarded a plan to McNamara in which primary responsibility for COIN in the host country was outlined as an Army role—ergo, the primary responsibility in the United States should similarly be vested with the Army. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen Curtis LeMay objected to this unilateral assessment and insisted that airpower was a vital component of COIN.[24] However, concerned that the Army would provide its own air support if the Air Force failed to do so, Air Force planners concluded that its "extremely limited" COIN capability would necessarily have to be expanded.

In the spring of 1962 the Air Force expanded its forces, and the 4400 CCTS attained group status on 20 March as the 1st Air Commando Group—which was authorized 792 personnel and 64 aircraft. In April the Special Air Warfare Center (SAWC) was created at Hurlburt Field, and the 1st Air Commando Group was subordinated to the SAWC. In October 1962 the Air Force submitted a program change proposal (PCP) to McNamara calling for "a six--squadron force of 184 aircraft and 2,167 primary element personnel for fiscal year 1964. With this end--strength, the Air Force could provide one combat applications wing, one air commando wing, and one composite squadron." The air commando wing would comprise

three T--28 squadrons with 75 aircraft, an RB--26 squadron with 25 aircraft, and a "combat cargo squadron" equipped with 12 C--46, 12 C--47, and 14 U--10B aircraft, all of which would reside in the United States and rotate to detachments overseas. The composite squadron, with eight T--28s, eight A--26s, 12 C--46s, 12 C--47s, and six U--10Ds, would be permanently deployed to Panama. On 24 November 1962 McNamara approved the PCP for fiscal year 1964.[25]

At the heart of the [aviation--FID] concept was the stated intent to develop an organization of foreign--language--trained, area oriented, and culturally and politically astute aviation experts to provide advisory and training support to foreign aviation forces.

As the war unfolded, aging T--28s and A--26s were soon replaced by A--1Es, and in late 1964 a second squadron of A--1Es—the 602d Air Commando Squadron (Fighter)—deployed to South Vietnam. By 1967 the 14th Air Commando Wing had been formed in South Vietnam, including five combat squadrons: two strike squadrons, two PSYOP squadrons, and a helicopter squadron.[26] In retrospect, the original mission of the 4400 CCTS had consisted "primarily of preparing small cadres for conducting—at the scene of insurgency activity—the training of friendly foreign air forces in counterinsurgency operations" with the objective of developing a "self--sufficient VNAF that would allow the withdrawal of US units."[27] But by 1965 the nature of the war had changed dramatically, and the special air warfare effort largely shifted its focus to support of US conventional ground operations.[28]

The rivalry between the Army and the Air Force was a constant source of conflict, with the Army maintaining that its organic aviation was better suited for COIN. To buttress its argument, the Army (not unlike the Marine Corps) argued that aviators should identify with ground combat personnel and that this identity was best achieved by being a part of the same unit. The Air Force, not surprisingly, maintained its doctrinal position that aircraft should be centrally managed under the operational control of a qualified air officer. Centralized control with decentralized execution remained a hallmark of Air Force doctrine, but it was agreed that special operations, including special air warfare, should be a joint undertaking. The basic principles were ultimately set forth in Unified Action Armed Forces and in the Joint Counterinsurgency Concept and Doctrinal Guidance (JCS Memo 1289--62). Appropriate annexes to the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan and the Joint Strategic Objectives Plan, as well as various statements by senior military officers, served to institutionalize the central theme of joint special operations.[29]

After 1965 special air warfare became an adjunct to the conventional ground war in Vietnam, but elsewhere in the world—especially in Latin America before 1965—special air warfare units remained largely dedicated to foreign advisory/training assistance. "Early in its special air warfare planning, the Air Force had recognized that prevention or defeat of subversion and insurgency called for more than military operations but rather included civic actions as well." General LeMay himself had concluded that doing civic actions would improve "our prospects . . . for preventing or relieving the conditions of unrest which could be exploited by insurgent elements in conducting guerrilla operations."[30] To that end, special air warfare forces conducted combined operations to inculcate in Latin American air forces the value of airpower in terms of transportation, communications, preventive medicine, weather operations, agricultural support, insect and rodent control, and other economic, political, and social services. As envisioned, these functions would "reduce

the demand for expensive (and prestige) weapon systems, promote internal security . . . and identify military forces with, not against, the needs and aspirations of the people."[31] By mid--1963, the Air Force had sent briefing, survey, or mobile training teams to a dozen Latin American countries.[32]

But as pointed out earlier, at the conclusion of the war in Vietnam the Defense Department, stung by defeat, largely purged itself of what had been laboriously created for COIN in the 1960s.[33] The subject was virtually eliminated from junior officer and noncommissioned officer curricula by 1976, and by 1981 the topic had all but disappeared from professional military education. But among the lessons learned as a result of the American experience in Vietnam, one with which military officers, politicians, and the general public alike agreed to, was "no more Vietnams."[34] Thus, following the war, COIN disappeared as a descriptive label, to be replaced by "internal defense and development" (IDAD) as a general term for the whole range of activities related to assisting less--developed countries; "stability operations" became the appellation ascribed to specific operational activities.[35]

In the end, the Vietnam War had instilled in the American public an almost visceral resistance to protracted US military intervention in foreign affairs—the much discussed "Vietnam syndrome." Nevertheless, a small cadre of academics and military thinkers persisted in addressing the threat of third world conflict. With the inauguration of Ronald Reagan as president and the advent of revolutionary insurgencies in Central America, these people found purchase for their doctrinal proposals as the national security bureaucracy began to pay attention to what was increasingly referred to as "low intensity conflict."

In a seminal report prepared for the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), Robert H. Kupperman declared that "the conflict least likely to occur—extended conventional superpower hostilities in Europe—nevertheless dominates [Department of Defense] thinking, training, and resource allocation." Kupperman insisted that the US military establishment was therefore least prepared for the most likely threat—"those small but critical low--intensity conflicts proliferating at the periphery of the great powers." Consequently, to meet this more appropriate threat, the Defense Department would "require new doctrine, organization, tactics, and equipment."[36]

The contention that the United States lacked the appropriate strategic policy, doctrine, and forces to conduct operations in the third world became a prevailing theme in professional literature throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, leading even the casual observer to draw obvious parallels to the outlook of the Kennedy administration regarding the threat of revolutionary guerrilla warfare. The difference, however, was the unitary treatment of COIN, pro--insurgency, combating terrorism, peacekeeping, counternarcotics operations, contingency operations, and the like as subsets of low intensity conflict. COIN had de facto, if not de jure, become subsumed to another construct. Thus, in the "LIC era," COIN found expression as FID and IDAD. Foreign internal defense encompassed US efforts to assist a friend or ally facing an internal threat; internal defense and development included the array of activities pursued by the host government to ameliorate if not eliminate the conditions which fostered discontent and precipitated the internal challenge to the government.

The problem of aircraft proved most vexing.

The threat posed by LIC, combined with the Desert One disaster, ultimately led to the

creation of USSOCOM, with foreign internal defense as one of its five principal missions. By 1991 the Joint Staff had begun work on Joint Publication 3--07.1, *Joint Tactics, Techniques and Procedures* [JTTP] *for Foreign Internal Defense*, and in 1992 the Air Force produced its first--ever official FID doctrine in Air Force Manual 2--11, *Air Force Operational Doctrine: Foreign Internal Defense Operations*.[37] For USSOCOM and AFSOC then, the challenge was to avoid simply making appropriate genuflections to salient features of successful FID concepts and uttering the appropriate buzzwords while failing to step forward with dollars and resources.[38]

Back to the Future

Although the Air Force nominally continued to perform the FID mission after Vietnam, it was as an adjunct to its conventional mission and was accomplished on an ad hoc basis. In other words, extant resources were tapped to perform FID activities. However, several studies had conclusively documented that "the lack of a sustained, coordinated effort by individuals dedicated to the FID mission is the principal reason we have failed to achieve the long--term changes in the way developing countries support, sustain, and employ airpower."[39] Recognizing this fact, the first theater analysis performed by the Joint Mission Analysis (JMA) organization of USSOCOM identified an aviation--FID requirement in US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) for uniquely skilled personnel and for short takeoff and landing capable aircraft (Findings 025 and 026).[40] The underlying logic corroborated the contention that a dedicated unit was better suited to facilitating long--term solutions to seemingly intractable airpower employment and sustainment problems in the third world. As a result, per CINCSOC instruction, AFSOC forwarded a statement of need (SON) to USSOCOM for a dedicated aviation--FID organization.

Sensing the potentially greatest obstacle to be US Army aviation objections, representatives from AFSOC and USSOCOM met with representatives of the US Army Aviation Center (USAAVNC) regarding the aviation--FID initiative. The meeting concluded with mixed results; USAAVNC and TRADOC supported the fixed--wing portion of the concept but expressed reservations about any AFSOC rotary--wing FID efforts—especially given the perceived prospects of overlap between USAAVNC and AFSOC missions.

Much of the reluctance had its roots in Army and Air Force squabbles regarding helicopters in general. In May 1984 the chiefs of staff of the Army and Air Force announced an agreement designed to improve cooperation between the services. Within the agreement were 31 initiatives designed to reduce waste and facilitate improved joint operations. Initiative 17 addressed the decision to transfer sole responsibility for rotary--wing support of SOF to the Army. The Air Force decision, however, had been made without AFSOF input. In 1986, after two years of heated debate, the House Appropriations Committee decided the expense of transfer outweighed any advantages and directed that Initiative 17 not be implemented. With the stand--up of USSOCOM in 1987, all SOF aviation assets fell within its purview and for all intents and purposes under a single "joint commander." Consequently, in 1991 the CINCSOC Joint Special Operations Aviation Board Report averred that "Initiative 17 is no longer an issue."[41] Nevertheless, the residue of the Initiative 17 battle could be detected at the meeting between AFSOC and USAAVNC and would continue to color the debate for months to come.[42]

In March 1991 the JMA quantified FID fixed--wing aircraft requirements, alluding to a "FID wing," and AFSOC submitted an updated mission need statement (MNS, the successor to SON) for a "family of Air Force, FID--specific, aircraft." Subsequently, in July 1991, HQ AFSOC published a concept

study which became the keystone for future development of aviation FID. At the heart of the concept was the stated intent to develop an organization of foreign--language--trained, area--oriented, and culturally and politically astute aviation experts to provide advisory and training support to foreign aviation forces supporting the host government's IDAD strategy. In November 1991 AFSOC and USSOCOM planners met to align priorities in the near, medium, and long term. The JMA study notwithstanding, the USSOCOM/SO J--5 (Plans) instructed AFSOC not to submit a program objective memorandum (POM) for aircraft.[43]

In the near term (fiscal years [FY] 1991–1994), AFSOC would continue development of the concept and would submit a POM request for a small "people only" organization. In the medium term (FY 94–96), AFSOC would stand up a dedicated organization, independent of the planning cell in the headquarters but reporting directly to the commanding general. Finally, in the long term (FY 96–98), the dedicated organization would grow to include more personnel and FID--specific aircraft.

Intrusions

From the beginning, two issues dogged the initiative to establish an aviation--equipped organization dedicated to foreign internal defense: the extent to which the unit would be "joint" and whether "owned and operated" aircraft would be part of the equation. By this time, General Lindsay had been replaced by Gen Carl Stiner as CINCSOC. In 1991 General Stiner had directed that the evolving aviation--FID unit be "joint," meaning that Army SOF personnel and assets would be assigned in addition to AFSOC resources. Soon afterward, US Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) raised several pointed misgivings about dedicating scarce resources to aviation FID, and a host of questions (e.g., whether to include special forces or limit support to Army SOF aviation assets only) bedeviled deliberations regarding the initiative for months.

The problem of aircraft proved most vexing. The decision with respect to ownership of FID--specific aircraft would impact the scope of the initiative in terms of capability, manning, basing, acquisition, funding, and so forth. The impact was detailed in a white paper produced by HQ AFSOC/XPF—the locus of aviation--FID concept development—in which several options were outlined, ranging from no aircraft to a full--fledged flying squadron. The least--preferred option was no aircraft, considered a "workaround option," in which the unit would rely on "creative ventures" to accomplish its mission. Citing demand for aviation--FID capability from the various theater commands, the white paper implied that anything less than a full--fledged capability would effectively negate its usefulness.[44] In short, aviation FID involves the application of airpower; without aircraft, the unit would be very limited in expertise outside of certain nonrated specialties (e.g., maintenance). A unit with some aircraft (owned or leased) would possess greater aviator expertise but would still fall far short of its full potential. Thus, the position of the FID planners was clear: for a SOF aviation organization with a FID mission, aircraft were appropriate and necessary.[45] The original study had concluded that a "family of aircraft," representative of those found in the developing world, would provide the means to develop FID--specific tactics, techniques, and procedures as well as provide for qualification, currency, and proficiency of aviation--FID aircrews. Moreover, assigned maintenance personnel—FID trainers in their own right—would maintain the aircraft as part of their own mission.

In December 1991 AFSOC prepared to submit POM inputs to USSOCOM without aircraft, per the earlier direction of the CINC's J--5. However, during a HQ AFSOC program evaluation group meeting, the USSOCOM representative instructed AFSOC to

reinstate aircraft in the POM submission. Ironically, during subsequent POM deliberations at USSOCOM, the entire aviation--FID initiative fell below the funding line. General Stiner is alleged to have instructed his staff to fund the initiative, but under General Lindsay it remained below the funding line, and in the end AFSOC "bought back" the initiative.[46]

In March 1992 the USSOCOM staff reviewed the MNS for FID aircraft. Not surprisingly, there was a mixed reaction. Within the J--3 (Operations), supporters claimed the "capability would significantly enhance FID operations in all theaters." USASOC nonconcurred, claiming that the MNS was inappropriate because "it appears to describe a combat organization in support of a US FID mission that would deploy these assets and perform the HN [host--nation] mission." Perhaps more to the point, USASOC maintained that "USSOCOM affordability for another major mobility program is doubtful." Moreover, the concept might prove "to be a very expensive program which will compete with other unfinanced mobility programs in USSOCOM." In short, aviation FID would compete with USASOC programs such as the MH--47 helicopter.[47]

Since 1991 aviation--FID personnel have deployed more than 75 times, mostly to Latin America but more recently to North Africa and the Middle East.

Responding to the USSOCOM review, AFSOC revised the mission need statement and appended a six--page letter responding to each and every criticism. Most importantly, the letter spelled out the underlying doctrinal validity of the initiative:

> The objective of our aviation--FID organization is to advise friendly governments on how best to employ and sustain their *own* air assets in support of their respective internal defense and development (IDAD) strategies—not to conduct operations for them. Nonetheless, appropriate aircraft are needed for our aviation--FID trainers to develop and perfect the flying skills, tactics, and techniques required in third world environments. Finally, in some limited instances, it may be advantageous to actually deploy AFSOC FID aircraft to demonstrate the utility of airpower, for example, in support of ground operations. The family of aircraft we envision is certainly capable of demonstrating this capability, and ideally a deployment of this nature would be joint, with Army special forces or Navy SEALs, etc., participating. As our ground counterparts impart the skills needed for ground operations, our aviation--FID advisors would be working with the host air force, focussing on aviation employment and support. An adjunct goal, then, would be to assist the host in developing a joint air--ground capability. As the host forces hone their own skills, we could withdraw our hardware and assist them to obtain their own assets through available security assistance programs. Regardless, the ultimate objective is to assist in developing the appropriate aviation capability within the existing resources of the host government.[48]

Nevertheless, the Requirements Review Board at USSOCOM did not approve the new mission need statement when it was briefed on 4 February 1993. The aircraft acquisition line was therefore dropped out of the POM, but monies were moved to the operations and maintenance (O&M) line to facilitate a "non--material alternative"such as leasing.[49]

A New SOF Aviation Unit (Sans Aircraft)

The debate regarding aircraft would continue to rage, however. In late August 1992 General Stiner was sufficiently convinced of the potential for aviation FID that he sent a letter to the JCS chairman stating that the USSOCOM FY 94–99 POM funded the initial

cadre (the "people only" unit) with a small O&M budget: "This grows to nearly 100 personnel by the end of the FYDP [Five--Year Defense Plan]. Unfortunately, the current schedule does not permit creation of an aviation--FID unit soon enough to meet emerging theater CINC requirements." General Stiner went on to point out that a joint and combined "proof of concept" deployment had been conducted earlier in the year in Ecuador which he characterized as a "resounding success." Finally, General Stiner requested "help to obtain the required funds and manpower billets needed to form the initial cadre and stand up the complete aviation--FID organization sooner than currently resourced in the USSOCOM POM."[50]

General Stiner's letter was a watershed in the evolution of the initiative. The Joint Staff subsequently determined that the "initiative meets a valid theater requirement in USSOUTHCOM and is within the USSOCOM charter." Moreover, the Air Force considered the aviation--FID organization "to be complementary to its own programs, and supports the initiative." However, the Army "expressed concern that the rotary wing portion of the organization may duplicate its own rotary wing" mission. Not surprisingly, the initial resistance of the USAAVNC remained intact.

The most important aspect of the Joint Staff review—one which would profoundly affect the character of the aviation--FID organization—addressed the operational concept. In an August 1992 letter, the Joint Staff reviewers declared that

> the mission of the aviation FID organization in USCINCSOC's first paragraph is too restrictive. If the organization's primary mission is to upgrade the capabilities of foreign air forces, then it can operate only under the security assistance umbrella. If its primary mission is special air operations in support of other US SOF, then it can also perform its FID mission using MFP--11 [Major Force Program] funds by conducting joint/combined training with other US SOF and foreign air and ground forces during major exercises and unit deployments for training.

Shortly after pointing out this patently obvious but previously overlooked fact, the Joint Staff requested a briefing to flesh out these and other issues.

USSOCOM briefers provided additional details on 12 January 1993 to the vice director of the Joint Staff (VDJS). Also in attendance was the former commander of USAAVNC, who had sternly resisted the initiative in 1991. His opposition set the pace for the conduct of the briefing which, in the end, was not a spectacular success. The VDJS, a Navy vice admiral, opined that by definition all special operations forces perform the FID mission; therefore a dedicated unit was unnecessary. The briefers bravely attempted to describe the de facto compartmentalization of SOF units by mission (i.e., some are devoted almost exclusively to direct action, others to counterterrorism, and so forth). In describing this aspect of SOF, the briefers asserted that direct action units could only perform FID in the discredited ad hoc fashion of the past, and in performing the FID mission, direct action units would degrade their core mission. The VDJS was not persuaded, and in closing he directed that the USSOCOM briefing be revised and provided to the service deputy operations deputies (DepOpsDeps), to TRADOC, and to the USAAVNC.[51]

An amended briefing was prepared and presented to the DepOpsDeps in March 1993. The key concept of the revised briefing—provided by AFSOC planners in response to the initial Joint Staff musings regarding a special air operations unit with a core FID mission—was the notional structuring of the proposed unit along the lines

of Army special forces. Although this meeting was also chaired by the VDJS, the feedback was more promising. Contributing to this more positive response was the fact that TRADOC interposed no objections and the current commander of the USAAVNC considered FID to be additive to his basic skills training mission for foreign aviators. Finally, the VDJS noted the popularity of the concept among the theater CINCs and the fact that the initiative was in line with defense planning guidance regarding the emerging post--cold--war security environment.[52]

The SOF Exception

The idea of Air Force FID operators being akin to special forces transformed the entire concept. The impetus for this sea change in outlook—from nominally a security assistance organization to special air operations focusing on FID—had its roots in what is known today as the "SOF exception." In 1984 the Government Accounting Office (GAO) audited military activities in Honduras during Operation Ahuas Tara II. The comptroller general issued a formal opinion to the effect that the Defense Department had violated fiscal law by using O&M monies (Title 10) to conduct security assistance (Title 22) activities. Army special forces were the principal perpetrators, and 1st SOCOM (the predecessor to USASOC) defended the activities as "own--force FID and UW mission--essential tasks training" comprising the mission--essential task list (METL). The logic advanced was that it was proper to use Title 10 funds for unit training overseas in order to maintain special forces core skills related to its wartime UW mission. In 1986 a second comptroller general opinion recognized a "special forces exception," acknowledging that the training of foreign forces was "minor and incidental" but nonetheless critical to special forces wartime skills.

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Later in 1986 the exception was extended to US Navy special warfare, AFSOF, and other US Army SOF (i.e., PSYOP and civil affairs). The exception, ultimately codified in Title 10, noted that SOF may "train and train with" foreign forces using O&M funds. The legislation also permitted "reasonable incremental expenses" to facilitate host country forces' participation. In 1991 CINCSOC offered an amendment which further clarified the SOF exception. The amendment deleted the "minor and incidental" restriction, and allowed combatant commanders to pay for rations, ammunition, transportation, and fuel costs incurred by foreign forces as a direct result of training with US special operations forces. The House and Senate conference committee accepted the amendment and directed the secretary of defense (SECDEF) to submit an annual report on the use of O&M monies by SOF to train the forces of friendly foreign countries.

Recognizing the SOF exception as the key to aviation FID, AFSOC planners turned to the best possible model available—Army special forces. For example, the mission statement for the 3d Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (3/7 SFG) states that the battalion "will plan, prepare for, and when directed, conduct special operations, primarily foreign internal defense (FID), in support of US objectives in the SOUTHCOM theater of operations."[53] In simple terms, 3/7 SFG is a SOF unit, capable of conducting all SOF missions but with a core mission of FID. The aviation--FID mission statement therefore became an unapologetic plagiarism of the

3/7 SFG mission statement: The aviation--FID unit would "plan, prepare for, and when directed, conduct special air operations, primarily foreign internal defense, in support of US and theater CINC objectives [and develop] and implement programs to advise, train, and assist foreign governments and combatant commanders in the planning, employment, and support of air operations supporting [host country] internal defense and development."[54]

Special Forces with Wings

Based upon the Joint Staff review and the issues raised at the initial VDJS briefing, AFSOC FID planners modeled aviation FID on special forces, creating a combat advisory unit activated for the purpose of serving the theater CINCs' training and advisory requirements in crisis, contingency, and war. Consequently, within the parameters of the SOF exception, the unit would train in peacetime as it expected to operate in war. That is, the unit would advise, train, and assist foreign air forces in the employment and sustainment of air operations. To accomplish this goal, the unit would apply a "total package approach," combining security assistance programs with unilateral, joint, and combined deployments for training. Moreover, the unit would provide "adaptive training" in--country, meaning training beyond the basic instruction received by host--country forces at US institutions such as USAF undergraduate pilot training or at the Inter--American Air Forces Academy and the US Army School of the Americas.

In that the mission of the unit would be similar to special forces, its organization largely came to mirror its mentor. The key became the operational aviation detachment (OAD), modeled on special forces operational detachments (OD). OAD--A teams would, in many respects, mimic OD--A teams; however, OADs would be task organized. Whereas OD--A's comprise specific military specialties common to all teams, OADs would be formed from "flights" and tailored to the requirement. A notional OAD might include pilots, other aircrew, maintenance, special tactics (combat control and pararescue), logistics, intelligence, and other specialists. But if the requirement were maintenance specific, the OAD might contain only maintenance personnel. Nevertheless, the OAD would provide an integrated, self--contained, "total package" approach to advising and training foreign air forces. And when three or more OAD--A teams deployed, an OAD--B team would deploy as a C^3I headquarters. Finally, an OAD--C team would remain at home station to provide connectivity. Tying all of this together, the OADs would train to their mission--essential task lists.[55]

Since the mission was to assist foreign air forces with respect to the totality of airpower, the unit would comprise a diverse mix of specialties, including fighter, airlift, and helicopter pilots; other aircrew personnel (aerial gunners, flight engineers, etc.); maintenance personnel; logistics and intelligence specialists; special tactics people; and so forth. The unit would be organized in flights with each oriented to specific theaters—much like special forces groups–from which the OADs would be organized, trained, and equipped.[56]

Education and training became a key component of the concept. Aviation FID personnel would receive academic instruction and specialized training in a phased approach, concurrent with their duties. The basic phase would impart a fundamental theoretical understanding of FID, including instruction in revolutionary warfare, intercultural communications, PSYOP, and related areas. All personnel would be qualified in a foreign language appropriate to the regional focus of their flight. Training would cover weapons, antiterrorism, combat survival, and high risk of capture, as well as technical training relevant to the respective specialties. In the advanced phase, FID personnel would attend courses on joint SOF

planning, air--ground operations, and the like. Finally, in the professional development phase, select personnel would attend programs designed to broaden the theory learned in the basic phase in order to make them politico--military professionals—regardless of Air Force specialty—enabling these individuals to advise foreign air forces in the application of "airpower." The net result would be a SOF unit comprised of culturally and politically astute aviation experts–what General Stiner referred to as "special forces with wings."[57]

The 6th Special Operations Squadron

In the spring of 1991, following General Lindsay's validation of the concept, a two--man cell was created in HQ AFSOC, Plans and Programs (XP). In October 1991 a politico--military officer was assigned and an office created (HQ AFSOC/XPF). Following the "buy--back" of the initiative in the winter of 1992, HQ AFSOC/XPF expanded to eight personnel "out--of--hide"—that is, the XP moved authorizations from other divisions to XPF. In buying back the initiative, AFSOC funded expansion of the core cadre to 20 personnel. Following a briefing to CINCSOC in July 1993, USSOCOM approved growth to squadron strength—approximately 112 personnel—and funded the squadron in the USSOCOM POM. Subsequently, in August 1993, HQ AFSOC/XPF "broke out" of the headquarters and became an operational unit: Detachment 7, Special Operations Combat Operations Staff (Det 7, SOCOS), reporting to the AFSOC director of operations (DO). Interestingly, this transitional unit retained headquarters management functions concerning continued development of the aviation--FID initiative; therefore, the METLs were a unique hybrid of operational tasks and headquarters management tasks (e.g., doctrine development). In April 1994, owing to Headquarters USAF realignment directives, Det 7, SOCOS was redesignated the 6th Special Operations Flight (6 SOF) and realigned under the 16th Special Operations Wing (SOW). At the same time, to provide continuity and "top cover," a FID office was retained in HQ AFSOC within the DO.

It would be unthinkable to deny Army special forces or Navy SEALs the tools required to accomplish their mission, or to deny AFSOF direct--action crews the platforms they need, or to prohibit training on these systems; yet this is the very position taken by many in the SOF community with respect to aviation FID and the 6 SOS.

In June 1994 the aviation--FID concept was briefed to the secretary of defense, and following a meeting between the AFSOC commander, CINCSOC, and the SECDEF, the AFSOC commander decided to accelerate growth of 6 SOF to full--fledged squadron status. Beyond the original core cadre of 20 people, two flights would be added per year beginning in FY 95 until seven flights were fielded. In light of this programmed growth, HQ AFSOC requested approval to stand up 6 SOF as a squadron, which was granted by HQ USAF. In October 1994 the flight was redesignated the 6th Special Operations Squadron (6 SOS) and became the first Air Force unit with FID as a core mission.

Since 1991 aviation--FID personnel have deployed more than 75 times, mostly to Latin America but more recently to North Africa and the Middle East.[58] These deployments have ranged from two--man OADs to complex joint and combined SOF operations. The initial focus was in Latin America, owing to SOUTHCOM's expressed requirements.

In fact, Ecuador was viewed as an early "laboratory" for aviation FID. Over a three--year relationship, AFSOC FID personnel worked painstakingly to encourage the Ecuadoran air force (Fuerza Aerea Ecuatoriana, or FAE) to commit to internal development as well as internal defense. Aviation--FID advisors therefore "brokered"—and accompanied as advisors—engineering and medical deployments which built schools, hospitals, and water treatment facilities and also provided medical, dental, and veterinary services to remote populations. In each instance, the FAE was placed in the forefront, projecting a positive government image to villagers in areas threatened by narcotraffickers and guerrillas. Beyond "civic actions," aviation--FID advisors worked with the FAE to improve their tactical skills, particularly in air--to--ground operations.

The proof, as it is often remarked, is in the pudding. In the earlier "proof of concept" deployment to Ecuador, it was learned that—owing to cultural factors as much as anything else—Ecuadoran army personnel had never communicated by radio with FAE pilots in the air. The predictable consequence was disaster. In a counterdrug operation in an area on the Colombian border known as the "iron triangle," Ecuadoran army riverine forces encountered Colombian guerrillas. The Ecuadorans suffered significant casualties. Ironically, FAE helicopter gunships were only minutes away, but the troopers on the ground did not know how to call for support or how to direct incoming aircraft even if they had been dispatched.

Over a two--year period, AFSOC aviation--FID personnel worked with FAE rotary--wing and fixed--wing units in air--to--ground operations in conjunction with 3/7 SFG OD--A's working with Ecuadoran infantry units. In March 1994 a major exercise was conducted in Ecuador, including three 6 SOF OADs, 3/7 SFG OD--A's, C--130s from the 133d Airlift Wing (Air National Guard), and an AC--130 gunship from the 919th Special Operations Wing (Air Force Reserve). FAE participants included fighters, helicopters, airlifters of different sorts, counterterrorism soldiers, air base security forces, and others. The Ecuadoran army provided elements from a regular infantry brigade and a jungle brigade. In addition to operational activities, FID trainers assisted FAE maintenance personnel in servicing their aircraft. The net result was a generation rate of over 80 sorties in two weeks, a number the FAE normally would produce over a 12--month period.

The joint and combined exercise was an unqualified success and was briefed to CINCSOC in April 1994. Shortly afterward, the Ecuadorans conducted another counterdrug operation in the same area as before, and again encountered Colombian narcoguerrillas. But on this occasion, employing air and ground assets in a sophisticated joint operation, the Ecuadoran military forces routed the guerrillas and suffered no casualties. The US military group commander in Quito later characterized the success of the operation as an outgrowth of the long--term training and advisory assistance provided by AFSOC FID deployments as well as of the exercise conducted the previous March.

The Ecuadoran deployment—and similar deployments to El Salvador, Venezuela, and Tunisia—confirmed the early studies, which maintained that "long--term benefits and continued joint/combined integration [are] wholly dependent upon [a] sustained and long--term relationship with host--country forces."[59] More importantly, the deployments proved that aircraft are a critical component. Inasmuch as the 6 SOS did not own its own aircraft, it became necessary to broker the participation of other units, mostly from the Guard and Reserve. The amount and quality of the training provided to the FAE and other air forces was directly tied to having deployed US aircraft to demonstrate tactics, techniques, and procedures. For example, the FAE had never tactically employed their C--130s, so it became neces-

sary to use the Air Guard C--130s to demonstrate tactical airlift concepts before turning loose the FAE pilots in their own aircraft. As had been maintained from the beginning, the bottom line was fairly straightforward: "A dedicated organization of technically proficient aviation experts—with their own aircraft—who are properly prepared . . . to operate in a FID role, are (sic) imminently better able to perform the FID mission than the ad hoc practices of the past."[60]

On 1 August 1995 the 6 SOS published a strategic statement of the future entitled *6th Special Operations Squadron: Concepts and Capabilities*. The document reflects that aviation FID continues to evolve to meet the new challenge of multilateral operations. The mission statement, revised and updated, asserts that the 6 SOS "is a combat advisory unit activated for the purpose of advising and training foreign aviation units to employ and sustain their own assets in both peace and war and, when necessary, to integrate those assets into joint, multi--national operations." The document asserts that the "squadron's wartime advisory mission supports theater combatant commanders in three interrelated areas: foreign internal defense (FID), unconventional warfare (UW), and coalition support . . . through advisory assistance delivered to foreign friends and allies for both internal conflicts and regional crisis or war."[61]

Therefore the 6 SOS has in form and concept moved away from an exclusively FID focus to one encompassing an array of activities subsumed within the construct of "coalition support." Among several actions cited, this support includes facilitating airspace deconfliction, integration of host aviation efforts into multinational air campaign operations, improving the tactical performance of host aviation forces, and maintaining vital links between host aviation units and the joint force air component commander. This latter capability was proved in the deployment of a 6 SOS OAD to Jordan during a major exercise in 1995. OAD advisors colocated with elements of the 5th Special Forces Group (5 SFG) and the Jordanian Air Force. Forging links between the host Jordanian army and air force, and then with 5 SFG, the OAD advisors were able to orchestrate unprecedented Jordanian air support to the combined ground forces. The deployed 5 SFG battalion commander extolled the value of the contribution of the 6 SOS advisors to the extent that he requested 6 SOS advisors accompany all of his future deployments.[62]

The Future of Aviation FID and the 6 SOS

The 6th Special Operations Squadron is the realization of a vision articulated by a handful of people at AFSOC and USSOCOM. Several have retired from active duty, and only a tiny few remain who have been with the initiative from its genesis. Nevertheless, 6 SOS is a concrete response to the challenges posed by the post--cold--war era. National military strategy is moving away from the cold war imperative of containment to a regional security orientation and to military operations other than war. Military doctrine and war--fighting doctrine are evolving to address regional threats worldwide, with an emphasis on assistance to friends and allies to prevent conflict, maintain internal stability, and pursue US security interests. US support to the action programs taken by another government to provide for internal defense and development is what we mean by FID. Given the evolution of the security environment to one of operations other than war, it was a natural step for the 6 SOS to evolve to a role in coalition support. Nevertheless, FID arguably remains the core mission.

Policy guidance on foreign internal defense is clear. Moreover, Congress has answered the question of proponency by assigning FID to USSOCOM as one of its five SOF missions. And it is important to note that during his introductory remarks at

a USSOCOM counterdrug conference, Gen Wayne Downing, then CINCSOC, asserted that "SOCOM doesn't need more commandos. We have enough commandos. What we need are guys who can do FID."[63]

Denouements

To their credit, successive AFSOC commanders have supported the FID initiative as well as the contention that aircraft are a necessary component. But the command has run up against institutional, political, bureaucratic, and even parochial obstacles that have diluted, if not doomed, an otherwise admirable effort to conduct aviation--centered foreign advisory operations as a complement to the ground--based FID mission performed by elements of Army special forces.

The issue of aircraft remains problematic. At this writing, AFSOC FID planners have submitted a new mission need statement for aircraft representative of those found in the developing world.[64] Although funding for leasing was provided in the POM, legal and bureaucratic obstacles tripped up the effort. But in truth, short--term leasing will serve only as a Band--Aid and thus delay to future AFSOC leaders the hard decision regarding owned and operated aircraft. It would be unthinkable to deny Army special forces or Navy SEALs the tools required to accomplish their mission, or to deny AFSOF direct--action crews the platforms they need, or to prohibit training on these systems; yet this is the very position taken by many in the SOF community with respect to aviation FID and the 6 SOS. This is remarkable given the fact that a succession of CINCs and AFSOC commanders have validated the concept as articulated. Therefore, as one Air University research report contended:

> The time has passed for debating organization and development of a FID capability. We must get to the business of creating forces that can conduct these missions within the third world setting—where they must be sustained. There is only one way to introduce mission capability and training credibility into AFSOC's evolving FID program such that the recipients will value our advice and assistance. *USSOCOM must aggressively fund the purchase . . . of a family of aircraft* . . . for the FID setting. . . . (Emphasis added) Until USSOCOM acts, AFSOC lacks the means to maintain proficiency and credibility in aircraft representative of those found in developing nations. AFSOC awaits the aircraft that are ultimately necessary to fulfill its FID mission responsibilities.[65]

As former US ambassador to the United Nations Jean Kirkpatrick once remarked, "I've my own version of that old Pogo canard, and [it] is, `I have seen the problem and it is us.'"[66]

Postscript

The 6 SOS suffered its first casualty in March 1996. Capt Mark T. Todd, a former instructor pilot and F--16 pilot, was killed when the El Salvadoran 0--2 he was flying aboard as an observer crashed on a combat search and rescue training mission. Captain Todd personified the aviation--FID operator. He had left the fighter community, fully aware of the pitfalls of such a decision, because he believed in the FID mission. If USSOCOM and AFSOC step up to fully realizing the potential of the 6 SOS, it will be a fitting memorial to his vision, the vision of those who went before him, and of those who will come after him. □

Notes

1. "Worthless residue." The Latin *caput mortuum* literally means "death's head," or a skull. The term originated with medieval alchemists, referring to the residue left after distillation was complete. Since then it has been used to refer to any worth-

less residue. Although this description is unfair to the dedicated special operations personnel at the time, the fact remains that the capability was clearly a shadow of its former self.

2. For a full treatment, see Andrew J. Harris, "Executive and Congressional Efforts to Reorganize Special Operations Force," (paper presented to the Annual Conference, International Studies Association, 1 April 1988); and Jim Wotten, "Special Operations Forces: Issues for Congress," Congressional Research Service, Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division, Report no. 84--227, 14 December 1984.

3. *Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1986, Conference Report 99--118*, 29 July 1985, 135. On the eve of passage, Senator Cohen asserted that SOF "are one aspect of the defense establishment that is most assuredly broken and must be fixed. These are the forces which we must rely on to respond to the conflict scenarios that we are most likely to face—international terrorism and low intensity warfare." William S. Cohen, "A Defense Special Operations Agency: A Fix for an SOF Capability That is Most Assuredly Broken," *Armed Forces Journal International (AFJI)*, January 1986, 38. For an insider's perspective, see Noel Koch, "Objecting to Reality: The Struggle to Restore U.S. Special Operations Forces," in Loren B. Thompson, ed., *Low--Intensity Conflict: The Pattern of Warfare in the Modern World* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1989), 51–75.

4. *DOD Authorization Act.*

5. As defined, FID is the "participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency." Joint Pub 1--02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 1 December 1989, 150. The other specified missions for SOF are "direct action," "special (formerly strategic) reconnaissance," "counterterrorism," and "unconventional warfare."

6. *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, January 1988), 34–35.

7. *The Goldwater--Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, Conference Report*. Cited in "Low Intensity Conflict Umbrella Concept," for--comment draft by USSOCOM, 3 October 1988, iii--15.

8. *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1987, Conference Report 99--1001*, 14 October 1986, 177.

9. Col Richard F. Brauer, USAF, Retired, a former commandant of the US Air Force Special Operations School at Hurlburt Field, Florida, coined this phrase to highlight the bifurcation of SOF priorities (e.g., emphasis on "direct action" skills *versus* the "softer" skills of cultural and political astuteness required of SOF trainers and advisors to foreign forces).

10. In its "Darts and Laurels" section, *AFJI* reported that at a Washington, D.C., symposium, the Marines "focussed on the basic mission of training third world nationals," whereas USSOCOM focussed on "parachuting and other high adventure aspects of its work." The dart concluded by asserting that "there used to be a time when Army special forces and psychological operators were our paramount trainers in the third world." *Armed Forces Journal International*, January 1991, 52.

11. CINCSOC memorandum to commander, AFSOC, 29 March 1990, subject: Validation of the Proposed AFSOC Foreign Internal Defense (FID) Organization. In addition to addressing the need for development of such a capability, General Lindsay went on to outline his vision of the AFSOC role, to include "establishing an academic center to develop language trained and culturally oriented instructional programs to train U.S. personnel" and establishing a "centralized `procurement' organization to purchase/lease aircraft deemed necessary to support a target country."

12. USSOCOM Directive 10--1, Organization and Functions: Terms of Reference for Component Commanders, 7 May 1993. In spelling out the role of AFSOC as "proponent" for aviation FID, Directive 10--1 tasked the commander of AFSOC to "develop an aviation FID implementation strategy in conjunction with USSOCOM staff agencies, USASOC, and NAVSPECWARCOM." In addition, AFSOC would define the qualifications and "prerequisite skills" for aviation--FID personnel; "plan, coordinate, and prepare joint aviation forces . . . for FID"; ensure integration with the other services and other government agencies to "address regional CINC theater strategies and host nation IDAD requirements"; develop and test equipment peculiar to aviation FID; and "designate a single manager for aviation FID security assistance issues for HQ AFSOC." Ibid., C--4–C--5.

13. Alan Wykes, *SS Leibstandarte* (New York: Random House, 1974), 6.

14. Maj John A. Hill, *Air Force Special Operations Forces: A Unique Application of Aerospace Power* (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, April 1993), 1. During the latter stages of the war there were three air commando groups; however, at its end, all three had been absorbed into conventional units. For a full treatment of the 1st Air Commando Group, see Maj R. D. VanWagner, *1st Air Commando Group* (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Military History Series 86--1, USAF Air Command and Staff College, 1986).

15. Special air warfare was defined at the time as "an overall descriptive term of reference including the air aspects of counterinsurgency . . . unconventional warfare . . . and psychological operations" as quoted from Brig Gen Monro MacCloskey, *Alert the Fifth Force: Counterinsurgency, Unconventional Warfare, and Psychological Operations of the United States Air Force in Special Air Warfare* (New York: Richards Rosen Press, 1969), 125.

16. Excellent treatments of this period can be found in Douglas Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era: U.S. Doctrine and Performance, 1950 to the Present* (New York: Free Press, 1977); and Larry Cable, *Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Vietnam War* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1986). Both authors argue that US policy makers misunderstood the nature of insurgency in Vietnam and constructed a COIN strategy doomed to failure. Antipodally, Harry G. Summers Jr., in *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1982); and Norman B. Hannah, in *The Key to Failure: Laos and the Vietnam War* (New York and London: Madison Books, 1987), argue that policy makers failed to ascertain that the insurgency was in fact a "smokescreen," obscuring the "essential political and strategic truth" that South Vietnam succumbed to a conventional invasion by North Vietnam "using irregular guerrilla tactics." Hannah, 189–90.

17. JCS 1800/401, 10 February 1961; JCS 1969, 3 March 1961; Col W. V. McBride, chief, Special Warfare Division, Directorate of Plans, memo to C. H. Hildreth, Air Force Historical Office, 9 November 1963, as quoted in Charles H. Hildreth, *USAF Counter--insurgency Doctrines and Capabilities, 1961–1962* (Washington, D. C.: USAF Historical Division Liaison Office, February 1964), 4. (Secret) Declassified 7 November 1983.

18. For a full treatment of the effect on special forces, see Alfred H. Paddock Jr., *U.S. Army Special Warfare, Its Origins: Psychological and Unconventional Warfare, 1941–1952* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982), and Francis Kelley, *U.S. Army Special Forces, 1961–1971* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1973).

19. Presentation for Lt Gen D. A. Burchinal, deputy chief of staff for plans and programs, by the Counterinsurgency Operations Division, Directorate of Operations, 1 June 1962, subject: Air Force Role in Counterinsurgency, cited in Hildreth, 5.

20. Ibid., 8.

21. Ibid., 8–9; and MacCloskey, 156.

22. Memorandum, McNamara to military department secretaries, 5 September 1961, subject: Experimental Command for Sub--Limited War, cited in Hildreth, 12.

23. Ibid., 13–14; and MacCloskey, 161.

24. Hildreth, 26–27.

25. Ibid., 25–30 and 43–45.

26. MacCloskey, 161–63.

27. Charles H. Hildreth, *USAF Special Air Warfare Doctrines and Capabilities, 1963* (Washington, D. C.: USAF Historical Division Liaison Office, August 1964), 2, 33. (Secret), Declassified 7 November 1983.

28. Robert F. Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Southeast Asia: The Advisory Years to 1965* (Washington, D. C.: Office of Air Force History, 1981), 63–268, passim.

29. Hildreth, *USAF Special Air Warfare Doctrines*, 3–5. For example, on 11 June 1963 CINCEUR requested the Joint Staff approve a dedicated special air warfare unit for Europe, capable of COIN and UW missions, and he emphasized a need for such a unit to work closely with the 10th Special Forces Group. Ibid., 8.

30. Ibid., 39. Address by LeMay, quoted from remarks before the Central States Shrine Association, St. Louis, Mo., 19 October 1963.

31. USAF Chief of Staff Policy Book, 1964, Item 13--3, June 1964, as quoted in Hildreth, *USAF Special Air Warfare Doctrines and capabilities.* 40**.**

32. Ibid., 44.

33. For example, "by 1974, USAF SOF had declined from 19 flying squadrons with 550 aircraft and over 5000 personnel . . . to less than 40 aircraft." Quoted from the AFSOC FID research report, *AFSOC Foreign Internal Defense*, Headquarters AFSOC, July 1990, 5.

34. President Richard Nixon himself would write a book by that name: *No More Vietnams* (New York: Arbor House, 1985).

35. Blaufarb, 286–87.

36. Robert H. Kupperman Associates, Inc., *Low Intensity Conflict*, vol. 1, *Main Report* (prepared for US Army Training and Doctrine Command, 30 July 1983), 1. Kupperman's report limited itself to the Army, but the conclusions were deemed relevant to the entire military establishment—including the Air Force.

37. Joint Pub 3--07.1, *Joint Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense*, November 1993; and Air Force Manual 2--11, *Foreign Internal Defense Operations*, 3 November 1992.

38. This is a loose restatement of Dr. Larry Cable's criticism of Defense Department inability to transcend superficial acknowledgement of the requirements of low intensity warfare. Larry Cable, "Re--Inventing the Wrong Wheel: U.S. Counterinsurgency Doctrine Since the Vietnam War" (paper presented at the University of New Brunswick Centre for Conflict Studies Conference on Low--Intensity War, 28 September 1991), 1.

39. "AFSOC Foreign Internal Defense (FID) Capability," position paper, 25 November 1991.

40. *AFSOC Foreign Internal Defense*, 10–11; and HQ AFSOC/XPF point paper, subject: Evolution of Joint Aviation Foreign Internal Defense (FID) Organization, 16 February 1993.

41. HQ AFSOC/XPF background paper, subject: Initiative 17 (I--17) and SOF Aviation Command and Control, 25 August 1992

42. For a brutally honest treatment of Air Force complicity in handing over AFSOF helicopters to the Army, see Koch, "Objecting to Reality."

43. Meeting notes, HQ AFSOC/CV and USSOCOM/SO J5, 8 November 1991.

44. HQ AFSOC/XPF, *6th Special Operations Squadron Required Strength and Capabilties*, white paper, undated.

45. HQ AFSOC/XPF point paper, subject: Aviation Foreign Internal Defense (FID) Issues, 16 February 1993.

46. HQ AFSOC/XPF, "Evolution." In "buying back" the initiative, AFSOC decided to fund the growth rather than fight for specific line--item funding in the USSOCOM POM.

47. HQ AFSOC/XP letter to USSOCOM/SO J3, subject: Mission Need Statement (MNS) for a Family of Air Force FID--Specific Aircraft, 4 August 1992.

48. Ibid.

49. HQ AFSOC/XPF, "Aviation FID Issues."

50. CINCSOC, memorandum to chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, subject: Aviation Foreign Internal Defense (FID), 7 August 1992.

51. Author's notes from USSOCOM/SOJ--5P briefing to VDJS, subject: Joint Aviation Foreign Internal Defense, Information Briefing, 12 January 1993.

52. From the beginning, the concept of the aviation--FID organization was designed to comply with Section I of Defense Planning Guidance (DPG), FY 1990–FY 1994, which considered a core mission of the Defense Department to be assisting friends and allies to defend themselves against armed insurgencies, terrorism, and internal coercion. In short, the DPG stipulated that the United States should give "increased attention to developing or strengthening capabilities relevant to the range of third world challenges." Moreover, basic national defense doctrine, contained in Joint Pub 01, *Joint Warfare of the U.S. Armed Forces*, 1990, page IV--13, contended that special operations forces be established to participate in the FID mission area (cited in HQ AFSOC/XPF, "AFSOC FID Capability," position paper, 25 November 1991).

53. Author's briefing to CINCSOC, subject: Aviation Foreign Internal Defense, 27 July 1993.

54. Ibid.

55. HQ AFSOC/XPF point paper, subject: AFSOC Operational Aviation Detachments, 11 May 1993.

56. Ibid.

57. HQ AFSOC/XPF, "Education and Training Support for AFSOC Aviation Foreign Internal Defense (FID)," background paper, 13 March 1992.

58. Lt Col Steve Whitson, commander, 6 SOS, telephone interview, 12 April 1996.

59. Lt Col Wray Johnson, "Aviation Foreign Internal Defense: The 6th Special Operations Squadron and the Realization of an Aviation--Centered FID Capability in USSOCOM," (unpublished article written in 1994), 8.

60. HQ AFSOC/XPF point paper, subject: Ecuador Aviation--FID Proof--of--Concept Lessons Learned: Implications for AFSOC Aviation--FID Concept, 12 August 1992.

61. Strategic plan, *6th Special Operations Squadron: Concepts and Capabilities*, 1 August 1995, 1.

62. Whitson.

63. Lt Chris Dugan, "FID: Get Onboard, or Get Left Behind," *Full Mission Profile*, the professional bulletin of Naval Special Warfare, Winter 1995/96, 30.

64. The new mission need statement reflects upon the AFSOC mission area plan (MAP), in that the MAP "identifies a critical deficiency in the ability of [FID] aircrew and ground maintenance personnel to maintain currency and proficiency on aircraft similar to those encountered in various countries around the world." In addition, the MNS asserts that "demand for 6 SOS training and advisory services presently exceeds the unit's capability to respond due to shortages of trained personnel. . . . If reliable training platforms are not available the 6

SOS will not be able to maintain currency or operate within satisfactory margins of safety." *Mission Need Statement for a Capability to Sustain Aviation--Foreign Internal Defense (Aviation--FID)/Coalition Aircrew and Maintenance Personnel Aircraft Proficiency*, HQ AFSOC/DOOD, 5 February 1996, 1–2. For a full treatment of the "family of aircraft"—the types, capabilities, etc.—see Maj Michael C. Koster, *Foreign Internal Defense: Does Air Force Special Operations Have What it Takes?* Research Report no. AU--ARI--93--2 (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, December 1993).

65. Koster, 73.

66. Jean Kirkpatrick, "The Role of the Soviet Union in Low--Intensity Warfare," speech given at the Low--Intensity Warfare Conference, sponsored by the secretary of defense, 14–15 January 1986, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C., printed in *Proceedings of the Low--Intensity Warfare Conference*, 130.

One of the marvelous things about life is that any gaps in your education can be filled, whatever your age or situation, by reading and thinking about what you read.

—Warren Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*